

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 0731

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CVIS, PFOR, KS, KN

SUBJECT: VISAS FOR NORTH KOREANS

REF: SEOUL 0649; STATE 21472; STATE 17996

1. MOFA AMERICAN AFFAIRS BUREAU DIRECTOR YI SANG-OK CALLED IN POLITICAL COUNSELOR FEB. 3 TO SAY THAT AMBASSADOR HAHM IN WASHINGTON HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED TO PRESENT TO DEPARTMENT ROK POSITION ON US INTENTION TO ISSUE VISAS TO NORTH KOREANS FOR PARTICIPATION IN ACADEMIC AND SPORTING EVENTS (REFTELS).

2. YI HANDED POL COUNSELOR WRITTEN STATEMENT WHICH HE SAID WOULD BE BASIS OF HAHM'S REPRESENTATION. BRIEFLY, STATEMENT MAKES FOLLOWING POINTS:

A. US RELATIONSHIPS WITH NORTH KOREA SHOULD NOT OUTPACE THOSE BETWEEN THE USSR AND THE ROK.

B. THE USSR DENIED ENTRY IN 1974 TO A ROK DELEGATE TO A WHO SEMINAR IN MOSCOW. IT WOULD THEREFORE NOT BE EQUITABLE FOR THE US TO PERMIT NORTH KOREANS TO PARTICIPATE IN ACADEMIC AND SPORTING EVENTS HELD IN THE US.

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C. WHEN THE US PERMITTED A NORTH KOREAN DELEGATE TO

ATTEND A WHO/FAO CONFERENCE IN WASHINGTON, IT WAS POINTED OUT THAT THIS PERMISSION WAS GRANTED ONLY BECAUSE THE NORTH KOREAN WAS ATTENDING A MEETING SPONSORED BY A UN-SPECIALIZED AGENCY TO WHICH NORTH KOREA WAS AFFILIATED. THE EVENTS NOW UNDER CONSIDERATION ARE ACADEMIC CONFERENCES AND SPORTS EVENTS. ISSUING VISAS TO THE NORTH KOREANS IN THESE INSTANCES WOULD MEAN MOVING TOWARD A MORE LENIENT VISA POLICY AND COULD POSSIBLY LEAD TO "ENLARGED CONTACTS" BETWEEN THE US AND NORTH KOREA.

D. THE ROK IS PURSUING "AN OPEN DOOR POLICY ON THE BASIS OF RECIPROCITY". NORTH KOREA IS RESPONDING BY PROVOCATIVE ACTS, WHICH HAVE THE SUPPORT OF THE USSR AND THE PRC. ANY MEASURE BY THE US WHICH MIGHT ENCOURAGE NORTH KOREA WOULD RUN COUNTER TO THE PRINCIPLE OF RECIPROCITY AND CONTRIBUTE TO FURTHER INTRANSIGENCEANCE.

E. OF THE FOUR EVENTS IN QUESTION, ONLY ONE IS SCHEDULED FOR 1975. ANY "GUIDELINE FOR ADVANCE INVITATIONS" WOULD BE SEEN AS A COMPREHENSIVE DECISION IN PRINCIPLE TO ADMIT NORTH KOREANS AND WOULD BE CONTRARY TO THE CONCEPT OF RECIPROCITY.

F. ISSUANCE OF VISAS TO NORTH KOREANS TO ATTEND ACADEMIC CONFERENCES OR SPORTS EVENTS SHOULD BE CONSIDERED ONLY WHEN CORRESPONDING MOVES VIS-A-VIS ROKG CAN BE EXPECTED FROM THE USSR AND PRC.

3. YI SAID THAT HE WANTED TO ADD TO THE WRITTEN STATEMENT THE VERBAL POINT THAT THE ROKG VIEWED THE NEXT FEW YEARS AS A CRUCIAL PERIOD IN NORTH-SOUTH RELATIONS. IT WAS HOPED THAT THE NORTH KOREANS WOULD RELAX THEIR INTRANSIGEANT STAND AND ENGAGE IN A MEANINGFUL DIALOGUE. UNTIL THIS HAPPENED, YI SAID, IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT THE UNITED STATES TAKE NO STEPS WHICH COULD BE INTERPRETED BY THE NORTH AS A CHANGE IN US RESOLVE TO SUPPORT THE ROK OR A SIGN OF US WILLINGNESS TO DEAL MORE LENIENTLY WITH PYONGYANG.

4. POL COUNSELOR REITERATED POSITION HE HAD STATED REFTEL AND POINTED OUT THAT THERE HAD BEEN NO BLANKET DECISION TO ISSUE VISAS TO NORTH KOREANS AND THAT EACH CASE WOULD CLEARLY BE DECIDED ON AN INDIVIDUAL BASIS.

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5. FULL TEXT OF ENGLISH-LANGUAGE STATEMENT PROVIDED BY YI FOLLOWS:

BEGIN TEXT:

A. ANY RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND NORTH KOREA SHOULD BE CONSIDERED IN PROPORTION TO THE ATTITUDES OF THE MAJOR COMMUNIST COUNTRIES SUCH AS THE SOVIET UNION AND PRC TOWARDS ROK. IN LIGHT OF THIS, THERE SHOULD BE NO MOVE BY THE UNITED

STATES, OUR MOST IMPORTANT ALLY, TO GET AHEAD OF THE CURRENT RUSSIAN ATTITUDE TOWARDS ROK IN HER RELATIONS WITH NORTH KOREA.

B. EVER SINCE THE SOVIET UNION ADMITTED OUR ATHLETIC TEAMS FOR UNIVERSIAD GAME HELD IN MOSCOW IN 1973, THERE HAS BEEN NO SIGN OF IMPROVEMENT IN ITS ATTITUDE TOWARDS ROK. AS A MATTER OF FACT, THE SOVIET UNION LAST YEAR DENIED ENTRY TO OUR DELEGATE TO A WHO SPONSORED SEMINAR TO BE HELD IN MOSCOW ALTHOUGH WE ARE A FULL-FLEDGED MEMBER OF THAT ORGANIZATION. UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, IT WILL NOT BE AN EQUITABLE PROPOSITION IF THE UNITED STATES IS TO PERMIT NORTH KOREAN DELEGATIONS TO PARTICIPATE IN ACADEMIC CONFERENCES OR SPORT EVENTS TO BE HELD IN THE UNITED STATES.

C. WHEN THE U.S. GOVERNMENT PERMITTED THE ENTRY OF THE NORTH KOREAN DELEGATION LAST YEAR TO A SEMINAR IN WASHINGTON, D.C. HELD UNDER JOINT SPONSORSHIP OF WHO/FAO, IT WAS POINTED OUT THAT THE NORTH KOREANS' PARTICIPATION WAS PERMITTED ONLY BECAUSE THEY WERE GOING TO ATTEND A CONFERENCE SPONSORED BY A U.N. SPECIALIZED AGENCY TO WHICH NORTH KOREA WAS AFFILIATED. THE CONFERENCES IN QUESTION THIS TIME ARE INTERNATIONAL ACADEMIC CONFERENCES AND SPORTS EVENTS. IF NORTH KOREAN DELEGATIONS WERE ALLOWED TO ENTER, THIS MEANS ANOTHER STEP FORWARD FOR A MORE LENIENT CONTROL OVER THEIR ENTRY, POSSIBLY LEADING TO MORE ENLARGED CONTACTS BETWEEN THE U.S. AND NORTH KOREA.

D. THE KOREAN GOVERNMENT IS PURSUING THE OPEN DOOR POLICY ON THE BASIS OF RECIPROCITY. BUT NORTH KOREA IS NEGATIVELY RESPONDING TO THIS, BY ENGAGING IN A SERIES OF PROVOCATIVE ACTS, THUS ADDING TO THE TENSIONS BETWEEN THE SOUTH AND NORTH, AND THE SOVIET UNION AND COMMUNIST CHINA ARE DEMONSTRATING THEIR SUPPORT TO NORTH KOREA WITH MORE FIRMNESS THAN EVER. UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, ANY MEASURE ON THE PART OF THE UNITED STATES WHICH MAY NCOURAGE THE NORTH KOREAN COMMUNISTS WILL NOT ONLY RUN COUNTER TO CONFIDENTIAL

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THE PRINCIPLE OF RECIPROCITY AND EQUALITY BUT ALSO HELP ENCOURAGE NORTH KOREA TO PURSUE ITS INTRANSIGENT, HARD-LINE POLICY.

E. AMONG THE FOUR CONFERENCES IN QUESTION, THE ONLY CONFERENCE SCHEDULED TO BE HELD THIS YEAR IS THE ONE FOR HISTORICAL SCIENCE. ANY GUIDELINE FOR ADVANCE INVITATIONS TO THE FUTURE CONFERENCES AND EVENTS WILL BE REGARDED AS A COMPREHENSIVE DECISION IN PRINCIPLE WHICH IS QUITE CONTRARY TO THE POSITION OF RECIPROCITY AND WOULD ALSO AFFECT THE PROCEDURE OF HANDLING SUCH MATTERS ON A CASE BY CASE BASIS.

F. ENTRY PERMISSION TO NORTH KOREAN DELEGATIONS TO ACADEMIC CONFERENCES OR SPORTS EVENTS IS TO BE CONSIDERED ONLY WHEN WE CAN EXPECT THE CORRESPONDING ACTS ON THE PART OF THE SOVIET UNION AND COMMUNIST CHINA IN FAVOR OF ROK. END TEXT.

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